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ABSTRACT

This digest provides general information on obtaining English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teaching positions abroad. The considerations involved in teaching EFL abroad and the qualifications needed for teaching EFL in various countries are outlined, and general information sources on EFL employment opportunities are listed and described. A section on opportunities for teaching in international schools, as well as a section listing addresses of various additional sources of overseas teaching information are also provided. (VWL)

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics
Center for Applied Linguistics
ERIC Digest

Opportunities Abroad for Teaching English as a Foreign Language: A Resource List

Prepared by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
Alexandria, VA

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Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) offers varied employment possibilities. For people wishing to live in another country for a period of time, there are teaching opportunities outside the United States. Individuals with little classroom experience or with no degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) can often locate entry-level positions in countries such as Korea and Japan. The rate of pay may be low, but can provide a sufficient income to live on for a period of time.

Considerations in Teaching EFL Outside of the United States

- One should have at least an undergraduate degree, preferably in a foreign language, English, or a related field. It is also helpful to have some classroom teaching experience, even if only as a volunteer.
- Native English speakers can often obtain freelance tutoring positions in countries where English is not the first language. However, it can be difficult to make enough money to live on, especially in large cities.
- Native English speakers are sometimes hired at language schools, even though they do not possess teaching qualifications or credentials in the field of English language teaching. However, salaries may be low.
- English language education, like science or mathematics education, is a discipline, and the ability to speak English does not necessarily qualify a person to teach it as a foreign language.
- Every summer, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) sponsors a summer institute at a university where leading educators offer intensive three or six week courses to newcomers in the field, and where participants can obtain teaching certification.

Qualifications and Salaries in Various Parts of the World

Qualifications and salaries depend on the country and the type of institution in which an individual obtains a teaching position. Some basic information is provided below.

Africa. TEFL and related qualifications are prerequisites for teaching at the university level; requirements for teaching experience depend on the particular institution or country. The demand is great for instructors who are qualified to teach English for academic purposes and technical and business English, as well as for specialists in curriculum design, teacher training, material development, and administration. Salaries are modest and vary according to the type of teaching institution.

Asia. There is a continuing need for EFL teachers, especially in China and Japan. Teaching opportunities also exist in Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Sri Lanka. An M.A. in TEFL is preferred. Salaries and benefits can vary greatly within a single nation.

Latin America. Government regulations dictate employment terms for foreign language teaching professionals. Preference is given to teachers with TEFL qualifications, with the highest demand for instructors who have the ability to teach all four language skills. Salaries are reported to be low. Major employers are USIA-sponsored binational centers, especially in universities in Peru, and Mexico.

Middle East. The Middle East is a major employer of EFL instructors. Salaries tend to be high and benefits are excellent. TEFL credentials are preferred, but an M.A. or PhD in English, linguistics, or literature suffices. Instructors are usually required to have substantial international teaching experience, and must be able to teach English for special or academic purposes.

Europe. The employment situation for EFL teachers in Europe, with the exceptions of Spain and Portugal, is limited because high unemployment rates render it difficult for Americans to get work permits. Master's degrees in TEFL or other EFL qualifications are generally prerequisites. Salaries and benefits are diverse (Gonzalez, & Schott, 1987).

General Information Sources on Teaching English Abroad

TESOL publishes a newsletter six times a year that features job notices, and offers placement and information services to individuals interested in teaching outside of the United States. Contact the nearest TESOL affiliate to find out when the next TESOL conference will be held. At a conference, one can meet individuals in the field who may direct newcomers to job leads in another country. Contact TESOL, 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-2705, (703) 836-0774.

International Employment Hotline ($28/yr) is a monthly newsletter that publishes information on overseas employment, including information on teaching positions. For information, write Cantrell Corp., P.O. Box 6170, McLean, VA 22106.

ELS International recruits EFL teachers for it's overseas programs. For more information contact ELS International, 5761 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, CA 90230, (800) 468-8978 outside California, or (213) 642-4618.

American Language Academy has several schools in Venezuela. For more information, contact American Language Academy, 11426 Rockville Pk., Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20852 (301) 984-3400.

Peace Corps. Teaching positions are available in elementary, secondary, normal, or vocational schools and universities, and no teaching experience is required. For more information, contact: Peace Corps Recruiting Office, Recruitment

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CAL Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC 20037

Resources, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20526, (800) 424-8580 or (202) 606-3387.

Teaching in International Schools

Opportunities for teaching and coordinating EFL at the elementary/secondary level exist in international and American schools in more than 300 countries throughout the world. Most schools are accredited, which not only ensures good quality education, but also allows teachers to return to employment in the United States with recognized teaching experience.

The qualifications needed for all accredited international schools are, at least, a BA/BS degree and valid teaching certification from a state education authority in a minimum of one subject area. Many schools also require two years of teaching experience.

In addition to the sources listed above, specific information on teaching opportunities in international schools can be obtained from the following sources:

Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools will provide information on overseas American-sponsored elementary and secondary schools. For more information, write A/OS, R245, SA-29, U.S. Dept. of State, Washington, DC 20520-2902, (703) 875-7800.

Department of Defense Schools (DoDDS) hire a number of EFL staff for their schools in various parts of the world. Although the clientele is American military, there is a need to provide special services to children entering the schools speaking a language other than English. For information, write or call DoDDS, 2461 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, VA, 22331, (202) 325-0885.

ARAMCO or the Arabian American Oil Co. (Foreign Service Employment) places qualified teachers in Saudi Arabia. ARAMCO, P.O. Box 4530, Houston, TX 77210, (713) 432-4014.

International Schools Services, Inc. (ISS) is a non-profit organization that recruits teachers in the United States to match educational openings abroad. ISS holds an annual conference where recruiters interview applicants. There is a registration fee for participation in the conference and a placement fee ($600 in 1990) that is paid either by the individual or the school. For more information on ISS, call (609) 452-0990 or write ISS, P.O. Box 5910, Princeton, NJ 08543.

American International School. For information on teaching opportunities outside of the United States, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: American International School, EISN, P.O. Box 662, Newton, MA 02161-0002.

University of Northern Iowa (UNI), Overseas Placement Service for Educators sponsors an annual recruiting fair. UNI's fair provides prospective candidates with an opportunity to interview with representatives from more than 60 international schools. Typically, one third of the applicants find jobs at the fair. There is a fee of $60 ($100 for teaching couples). UNI also provides periodic vacancy newsletters for all registrants ($35 if not registered), December through August. UNI Overseas Placement Service for Educators, Student Services Center, Rm 19, Cedar Falls, IA, 50614-0390, (319) 273-2083.

National Teacher Placement Bureaus of America operates a number of recruiting services each year. Registration and placement fees are about six and a half percent of the first year's salary. National Teacher Placement Bureaus of America, P.O. Box 09027, 4190 Pearl Rd., Cleveland, OH 44109, (216) 741-3771.

The following is a list of other fairs or agencies:

- Educational Career Services, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024, (213) 825-2981.
- Association of American Schools in South America, Inc., FIU-Bay Vista Campus, Biscayne Blvd. at 151 St., N. Miami, FL 32611.
- Field Services, Edinboro University, Edinboro, PA 16444, (814) 732-2804.
- The International Educator's Institute, PO Box 103, West Bridgewater, MA 02379, (508) 580-1880.

Additional Sources of Overseas Teaching Information

Many countries recruit educators through their embassies in Washington, DC. It may be worthwhile to contact the educational officer of the foreign embassy or to write directly to the Ministry of Education in a particular country.

Other possibilities for procuring teaching positions abroad include the following:

Teacher Exchanges

- Teacher's Fulbright Exchange, 301 4th St., SW, Rm 353, Washington, DC 20547, (202) 485-2555.

Teaching Assistantships/Fellowships

- Institute of International Education, 1400 K Street., NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 898-0600.
- Institute of International Education, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, (212) 883-8200.
- United States Information Agency (USIA), Staff Office of Personnel and Training, 301 4th St., SW, Washington, DC 20547, (202) 619-4659.

International Corporation Programs

- Exxon Corp., ECI Recruiting Office, 200 Park Ave., Florham Park, NJ 07932 (201) 765-7000.
- Northrop Aircraft-Saudi Arabia Manager, English Language Training, Northrop (137), APO New York, NY 09616.
- Transcentury Corporation (for African universities), Placement and Recruitment, 1724 Kalorama Rd., NW, Washington, DC 20009, (202) 328-4411.

For United States Territories

- Director of Education, Department of Education American Samoa: Pago Pago, American Samoa 96920.
- Assistant Superintendent, Personnel Department of Education, Government of Guam, Agana, Guam 96910.
- Personnel Officer, Office of High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950.
- Secretary of Education, Department of Education, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico 00900.
- Commissioner of Education, Dept. of Education, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00801.

Religious Schools

- United Church Board for World Ministries, Overseas Personnel Office, New York, NY 10027.

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